

8:15 *morning*

QUESTIONS TO BE SUBMITTED TO WAAT
FOR COFFEE CLUB PROGRAM
CONCERNING THE WORK OF THE MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON GROUP RELATIONS OF
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

MODERATOR:

Dean Hochel, as Chairman of the Commission, I would like to throw the first question at you.

Question 1. *Points*

What is the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations?

Answer:

It is a Group of 15 lay leaders in the City of Newark, appointed by the Mayor with terms of office on a rotational basis, ranging from 1 - 5 years. The Group meets on the third Wednesday night of each month in Room B-21, City Hall.

2.

MODERATOR: *WAAT*

Very briefly, could you tell us, Mr. _____, what you conceive the purposes of the Commission to be?

Answer:

The specific purpose is to maintain peace, harmony and understanding among the various racial and religious groups which make up our metropolitan community.

3. MODERATOR: *LebPaus*

Mr. Chambers, an assistant director of the Commission, would you like to add to that description, or explain to our audience a little something about your work?

Mr. Chambers:

b. MODERATOR:

~~MARK~~
Dean Heckel, are there any other cities in the United States which have such Commissions in operation?

Answer:

According to our latest record, there are approximately 35 cities which have similar organizations, and operate under local ordinances and are appointed by the Mayor of the City. Some outstanding examples are: Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Los Angeles, Boston, Buffalo, Youngstown, and recently New York City.

MODERATOR: "Well, it certainly looks as if Newark is in pretty good company."

5. Commissioner ^{DeGraaf D. L.} ~~DeGraaf~~, let me give you a leading question.

I wonder if we could now get down to a few specifics of your operation here in Newark. What is one aspect of the work which you think might interest our radio listeners?

Answer:

Possibly it might be better if I give you a general answer and then we can get down to specifics a little later. You see, our work is somewhat divided into two general areas. We refer to these areas as our education program and action program.

The educational angle includes numerous responsibilities such as: Running Human Relations Workshops in cooperation with the Board of Education; planning programs; film forums; and other brotherhood activities for the many organizations of Newark interested in better human relations for all people.

Answer, continued.

On the other side of our coin would be our Research and Action Program which calls for specific training in every case. For instance: a woman with 3 children calls our office complaining that the neighborhood kids are giving her children a hard time. In one case, it was a Polish woman living in a non-Polish neighborhood, who did not appreciate having her youngsters called "dirty Polacks". The Staff of our Commission then visited this woman, got all the information it could from her and then called upon all the other parents in the surrounding area who appeared to be involved in this incident. It took about 5 visits and almost as many days time before all the persons involved had been talked with. This case was closed by simple discussion and conciliation on the part of our Staff. But one must realize that all the complaints we receive are not so easily concluded.

MODERATOR. "That's very interesting. I'm getting a little better idea of how you operate."

6. *Rephrased* Dean Weiss, can you give our radio audience another example of the kinds of things you do or, possibly, something you haven't done but would like to do for this community?

Answer.

"Yes, I have always felt that housing is the key-stone to most all other problems in the field of intergroup relations. If individuals are permitted to live where they wish to live in accordance with their ability to pay, this thing we call segregation would not occur so frequently. If segregation were eliminated, many of the aspects of discrimination and prejudice which accompany this segregated living pattern, could be eliminated.

Answer, continued.

A very interesting case developed this past year, in which a Chinese engineer was about to buy a home in a formerly all-White neighborhood. The retired couple who wished to sell their home to this ideal Chinese family were hounded and harassed by their next-door neighbors, as well as others who lived across the street, to such an extent that they called our office in despair. "What could they do?" They wanted to sell their house, they liked the Chinese family, but they could not stand the scorn and hatred of their neighbors, which was leveled against them simply because their neighbors didn't like the Chinese moving into their "nice neighborhood". There are many variations on this theme as you can well imagine. And I'm sure that you can understand why Negroes and Puerto Ricans, attempting to move into similar neighborhoods might have even more severe problems. In every case our philosophy is to prepare the old neighborhood to receive the new neighbors with democratic understanding. Naturally, this is not always possible and we do fail in some instances to pave the way for a new "move-in".

7. MODERATOR:

I seem to recall something like this having taken place in Teaneck several months ago. Could any of you enlighten us as to what the people in Teaneck did?

Answer: (To be given by any one, or, all three, of the panelists.)

M A C E C

8. MODERATOR:

Newark

Would all of you agree then that a shortage of housing for all people is the "Achille's Heel" of intergroup problems?

Answer:

following

(This and the/questions will be answered by one panelist or contributed to by all three)

9. MODERATOR:

If housing is the key factor in better human relations, would you think there is any immediate answer to this major problem?

19 CC

10. MODERATOR:

"I know this has nothing to do with Newark, but why is there so much talk in the Nation today about desegregation of schools in the South?

If desegregation is so important that our Supreme Court honored the philosophy with an unusual decision calling for the desegregation of all public schools in the Nation, why isn't that just as important to Newark citizens as housing desegregation?"

*MARK
START*

MODERATOR:

11. I wonder if one or all of you could give us an idea of one of your typical meetings? You mentioned that you meet once a month, what happens when you meet together?

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MODERATOR:

12. Some articles were in the newspaper recently about a Community Research program. They called it a Community Audit or a community Self Survey. Could one of you tell us a little bit more about the purpose and the conduct of a self survey?

MODERATOR:

13. What other cities or communities have used community audits?

MODERATOR:

14. Would you say they have been successful?

*Answers
to
what cities
and
Los Angeles
in particular
Trenton*